

Many back strict gun laws, but opposition tends to be louder

WASHINGTON (AP) — Majorities of U.S. adults think mass shootings would occur less often if guns were harder to get, and that schools and other public places have become less safe than they were two decades ago, polling shows.

Still, public attitudes on guns and gun policy are complicated, and the issue has seen little by way of federal legislative changes in more than a decade. In the wake of Tuesday's massacre at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, Democratic governors and lawmakers are pleading for gun restrictions. Reforms will meet Republican resistance both in Congress and state legislatures and are unlikely to advance.

While it's not unusual for polling to show higher support for restrictions among the general public after a mass shooting, attitudes on gun regulation are overall rather stable over time, said John Roman, senior fellow at NORC at the University of Chicago.

In 2020, about half of voters in the presidential election said U.S. gun laws should



Remy Ragsdale, 3, attends a protest organized by Moms Demand Action on Wednesday May 25, 2022, at the Governor's Mansion in Austin, Texas, after a mass shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde.

Associated Press

be made stricter, according to AP VoteCast, com-

pared with about a third saying they should be left

as they are and only about 1 in 10 saying they should

be made less strict.

Continued on next page

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:

TICO KOCK
STEEL DRUM
4 - 6pm

MONDAY:

ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

TUESDAY:

JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

WEDNESDAY:

CARLOS ORLATE
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

THURSDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

FRIDAY:

RICKY THOMAS
GUITAR
7 - 9pm

SATURDAY:

ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

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Continued from Front

WHAT ELSE DO AMERICANS THINK ABOUT GUN LAWS?

In March 2019, an AP-NORC poll showed a majority of U.S. adults — 58% — saying they thought there would be fewer mass shootings in the U.S. if it were harder for people to legally obtain guns. Many specific measures that would curb access to guns or ammunition also get majority support, according to polls.

There is widespread agreement on one measure in particular: making private gun sales subject to background checks.

Attitudes on other gun policies vary starkly by partisanship. For example, new data from an AP-NORC poll conducted earlier in May shows 51% of U.S. adults favor a nationwide ban on the sale of AR-15 rifles and similar semiautomatic weapons, while 32% are opposed. An additional 18% say they hold neither opinion. Seventy-five percent of Democrats but just 27% of Republicans were in favor.

Erica Martinez, a 37-year-old in Lincoln, Nebraska, said she was "horrified" and "irate" after Tuesday's massacre and that there's obviously a gun problem in this country. Laws need to be stricter, she said, and it should be harder for someone to get a gun.

"These school shootings are becoming more prevalent now, and there's just too many innocent little lives that are lost because this 18-year-old kid was able to just go and buy a gun," Martinez said. "I honestly and truly think that it could



People gather outside the George R. Brown Convention Center to protest the National Rifle Association's annual meeting in Houston, Friday, May 27, 2022.

Associated Press

have been prevented."

GUN OWNERSHIP IN THE U.S. In April 2021, a Pew Research Center survey showed gun owners much more likely than those without guns to support expanding concealed carry and shortening waiting periods for legal gun purchases. Gun owners were much less likely to back bans on high-capacity ammunition magazines and assault-type weapons.

Forty-six percent of U.S. adults report living in a household with a gun, according to a March poll from NORC at the University of Chicago. Five percent said they purchased a gun for the first time during the pandemic, and those first-time gun owners tend to share policy preferences with long-term gun owners, NORC's Roman said.

Federal data also shows

gun sales rose significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The number one reason why somebody buys a firearm is they feel like it puts them at less risk," said Roman. "When you have an event like COVID, where people feel like the world is very unsafe in general, you see big spikes in people buying one."

Mike Miller, a 68-year-old conservative in Woodland Park, Colorado, said he owns guns for home defense, along with hunting.

"I think it's in our constitution, and I think we have the right to have our weapons," he said. "I don't think that's a problem with like the shooting that just happened. I think it's bigger issues."

WHO IS MORE MOTIVATED ON THE ISSUE?

Efforts to pass gun restric-

tions — even background checks — have been futile in Washington, met with opposition from Republican lawmakers.

Roman suggests people who own guns and oppose gun control have a louder voice in the political process because of their personal stake on the issue. Those who want stricter laws have strong opinions about the impact of guns on society, he said, but they often lack that personal connection.

"Your own costs and benefits are always more motivating, galvanizing, they create stronger preferences than the sort of conceptual, theoretical preferences," he said.

The voices of those looking for restrictions tend to get louder after a mass shooting, Roman said, creating a window of opportunity for

gun control policy before they recede again.

An AP-NORC poll conducted just after a shooting at Oxford High School in Michigan showed 24% of Americans — including 41% of Democrats — named gun laws in an open-ended question as a priority for the government for 2022, a sharp increase from just 5% for 2021 and 12% for 2020.

"Either there's going to be a quick movement towards some gun regulation and new gun laws or this moment will pass and next year, we'll be talking about something else," he said.

MENTAL HEALTH

Many Republican lawmakers have focused on mental health as a key factor in preventing mass shootings at schools.

The 2019 AP-NORC poll showed bullying, along with the availability of guns, were considered most responsible for shootings in schools. About half of Americans said these were both "a great deal" to blame. In the poll, there was bipartisan agreement on bullying, but Democrats were much more likely than Republicans to blame the availability of guns.

Derek Lavarway, a 44-year-old political independent in Chaumont, New York, said his main concern is mental health.

"I think there's a balance between gun control and, you know, figuring out ways to get people feeling better about themselves and their lives," he said. "We desperately need to somehow find a way for a society that creates individuals that don't do these sorts of things." □



South Korean and U.S. missiles are displayed at Korea War Memorial Museum in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, May 26, 2022.

Associated Press

U.S. levels new sanctions after North Korea missile launches

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. targeted two Russian banks Friday as part of new sanctions over alleged support for North Korea and its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

The sanctions come after what the U.S. says were three new ballistic missile launches by North Korea on Tuesday, including one

intercontinental ballistic missile.

The launches happened after President Joe Biden ended an Asian trip in which he stressed Washington's commitment to defending allies from the North's nuclear threat.

The U.S. says this week's launches brought North Korea's total for this year to 23, as the isolated country pushes to develop and ex-

pand the range of its nuclear and missile programs. Friday's sanctions targets include two Russian banks, Far Eastern and Sputnik, that the U.S. says do business with U.S.-sanctioned North Korean entities. Bank Sputnik also helped North Korea arrange payments for the use of Russian satellite services, the Treasury Department said in announcing the sanctions. □

McCarthy, GOP lawmakers escalate standoff with Jan. 6 panel

By FARNOUSH AMIRI and MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy is making it clear that he will likely defy a subpoena from the House committee investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol attack, escalating a standoff with the panel over his and other GOP lawmakers' testimony.

In an 11-page letter to the panel Friday, an attorney for McCarthy argued that the select committee does not have the authority to issue subpoenas to the lawmakers under House rules and demanded answers to a series of questions and documents if his client were to comply.

Attorney Elliot Berke requested a list of "topics that the Select Committee would like to discuss with the Leader, and the constitutional and legal rationale justifying the request."

"I expressly reserve Leader McCarthy's right to assert any other applicable privilege or objection to the Select Committee's subpoena," Berke wrote.

The House panel believes testimony from the Republi-



Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., sit together as they attend a Congressional Gold Medal ceremony to honor members of the Merchant Marine who served in World War II, at the Capitol in Washington, Wednesday, May 18, 2022.

Associated Press

can lawmakers is crucial to their investigation as each of the men was in contact with then-President Donald Trump and his allies in the weeks and days leading up to the Capitol insurrection. Some participated in meetings and urged the White House to try to overturn the 2020 presidential results.

McCarthy has acknowledged he spoke with Trump on Jan. 6 as Trump's supporters were beating police outside the Capitol and forcing their way into the building.

But he has not shared many details. The committee requested information about his conversations with Trump "before, during

and after" the riot.

His apparent defiance presents a new challenge for the committee after lawmakers decided to take the extraordinary and politically risky step of subpoenaing their own colleagues.

"For House Republican leaders to agree to participate in this political stunt

would change the House forever," the California lawmaker wrote Thursday in an op-ed in The Wall Street Journal with GOP Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio.

The committee now must decide whether to enforce the subpoenas even as it looks to wrap up the investigation and prepare for a series of public hearings in early June. It could refer the lawmakers to the House ethics committee or take steps to hold them in contempt.

The subpoenas were issued to McCarthy, Jordan, and Reps. Scott Perry of Pennsylvania, Andy Biggs of Arizona and Mo Brooks of Alabama in mid-May. The panel has already interviewed more than 1,000 witnesses and collected more than 100,000 documents as it investigates the worst attack on the Capitol in two centuries.

"I have no relevant information that would advance any legitimate legislative purpose," Jordan said in a letter detailing his reasons for not cooperating. The others indicated after the subpoenas were issued that they too would not cooperate. □

Biden tells Naval Academy grads Putin 'NATO-ized Europe'

By ZEKE MILLER

ANNAPOLIS, Maryland (AP)

— President Joe Biden told Naval Academy graduates Friday that they will be "representatives and defenders of our democracy," as free societies are under threat from Russia's invasion of Ukraine to China's maritime expansion.

Delivering a commencement address to more than 1,000 newly commissioned ensigns and second lieutenants at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium, Biden said the Western response to Russian President Vladimir Putin's "brutal" war in Ukraine shows the world is aligning not on geography, "but in terms of values." He called the invasion, "A direct assault on the fundamental tenets of rules-based international order," adding, "that's the world

you're graduating into."

"The actions taken by Putin were an attempt, to use my phrase, to Finland-ize all of Europe, to make it all neutral," Biden said. "Instead, he NATO-ized all of Europe." Biden told graduates that while they will learn to fly the most advanced planes, staff cutting-edge ships and utilize novel technologies, "The most powerful tool that you'll wield is our unmatched network of global alliances and the strength of our partnerships."

The president told graduates that they will "defend the international rules of the road," particularly in the Indo-Pacific region where they will be called on to "ensure freedom of navigation in the South China Sea and beyond."

"These longstanding mari-

time principles are the bedrock of a global economy and of global stability," he said. "You're going to help knit together our allies in Europe with our allies in the Indo-Pacific."

Biden did not address two mass shootings in as many weeks in his remarks. He, along with first lady Jill Biden, will visit Uvalde, Texas on Sunday to console grieving families after Tuesday's shooting at an elementary school that killed 19 children and two teachers, the White House said.

Biden's remarks to the Naval Academy marked his first commencement address of the year. He is also set to deliver remarks at Saturday's graduation ceremony at the University of Delaware, his alma mater. The president opened his speech by paying tribute to



U.S. Naval Academy graduates celebrate and throw their covers at the end of the academy's graduation and commission ceremony in Annapolis, Md., Friday, May 27, 2022.

Associated Press

the class of 2022's resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and with a customary pardoning of any minor infractions made by midshipmen during their time in the academy.

He also paid tribute for for-

mer Republican Sen. John McCain, who is interred on the grounds of the academy, saying, "Being here I can't help think of John and how the naval academy meant so much to him." □

California, New Zealand announce climate change partnership

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Top officials from California and New Zealand signed a pledge Friday agreeing to help fight climate change by sharing ideas and best practices, including how to put millions more electric vehicles on the road.

Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, and New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern spoke about the agreement at San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. The agreement doesn't commit either government to specific policies but outlines broad areas for cooperation. "We have a natural connection and I'm so pleased we've put pen to paper today to confirm that and continue our cooperation on one of the great challenges from our generation," Ardern said. Cars, trucks and other parts of the transportation sector are California's biggest contributor of greenhouse gas emissions, and New Zealand's second largest behind agriculture, Ardern said. California is moving to ban sales of new gas-powered cars in the state by 2035.

New Zealand wants 30% of



California Gov. Gavin Newsom and New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern pose with agreements they signed at the San Francisco Botanical Garden in San Francisco, Friday, May 27, 2022.

Associated Press

all car sales to be electric by that year.

Newsom said he expects competition to grow in the electric vehicle market, which Tesla currently dominates, likening it to when Netflix started facing competition from other streaming services.

New Zealand is home to 5 million people compared to California's population

of 39 million and has a much smaller economy. Ardern said her government will talk with California officials about programs that offer incentives for people to get rid of older, gas-guzzling cars. New Zealand is heavily focused on reducing emissions from its important agriculture sector.

California is also home to a major farming industry

that produces many of the world's fruits and vegetables. The agreement says the two governments may engage in joint projects to expand farming practices that build soil health, reduce methane emissions and boost water efficiency. The memorandum of cooperation was signed by Jared Blumenfeld, secretary of the California Environmen-

tal Protection Agency, and Jeremy Clarke-Watson, New Zealand's consul-general in Los Angeles.

California already has climate-focused agreements with many other nations, including China, Canada, and Mexico.

Former California Gov. Jerry Brown, also a Democrat, helped launch a coalition of 270 subnational governments, aimed at keeping an increase in emissions to below 2 degrees Celsius.

At last year's global climate change conference in Scotland, California signed a brief joint declaration with New Zealand and the Canadian province of Quebec to share information on climate policies including carbon markets.

Because of Ardern's high-profile role in the wake of the 2019 massacre of 51 worshippers at two mosques in Christchurch, the issue of gun control was also expected to come up. Newsom is pressuring the state Legislature to send him a package of gun reform bills in the wake of this week's killing of 19 children and two teachers at a Texas elementary school. □

U.S. Forest Service: Prescribed burns initiated massive fire



This satellite image provided by Maxar Technologies shows the active fire lines of the Hermits Peak wildfire, in Las Vegas, N.M., May 11, 2022.

Associated Press

By MORGAN LEE and CEDAR ATTANACIO

Associated Press

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — Two fires that merged to create the largest wildfire in New Mexico history have both been traced to prescribed burns set by U.S. forest managers as preventative measures, federal investigators announced Friday.

The findings could hold implications for the future use of prescribed fire to limit the buildup of dry vegetation amid a U.S. Forest Service moratorium on the practice.

They also could affect complex deliberations concerning emergency aid and liability for a fire that has spread across 486

square miles (1,260 square kilometers) and destroyed hundreds of structures.

The two fires joined in April to form the massive blaze at the southern tip of the Rocky Mountains, in the Sangre de Cristo range.

One of the fires was previously traced to April 6, when a prescribed burn, set by firefighters to clear out small trees and brush that can fuel wildfires, was declared out of control.

On Friday, investigators said they had tracked the source of the second fire to the remnants of a prescribed winter fire that lay dormant through several snowstorms only to flare up again last month.

Investigators said the prescribed "pile burn" was initiated in January at Gallinas Canyon in the Santa Fe National Forest outside Las Vegas, New Mexico, and concluded in the final days

of that month. Fire was reported again in the same vicinity on April 9 and escaped control 10 days later amid dry, hot and windy conditions, Forest Service investigators found.

Scientists and forest managers are racing to develop new tools to forecast the behavior of prescribed fires amid climate change and an enduring drought in the American West. Prescribed fires are aimed at limiting the accumulation of timber and underbrush that, if left unattended, can fuel extremely hot and destructive wildfires.

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham in a statement called the investigation results a "first step toward the federal government taking full responsibility" for the New Mexico wildfire. She highlighted her pending request to President Joe Biden to direct the Federal

Emergency Management Administration to pay for 100% of costs related to a broad range of recovery efforts.

Forest Service Chief Randy Moore last week announced a 90-day pause and review of protocols for prescribed fires that limit the buildup of flammable vegetation that can lead to extremely hot and uncontrollable wildfire. He did not specifically link the review to fires in New Mexico. "It will also ensure the prescribed burn program nationwide is anchored in the most contemporary science, policies, practices and decision-making processes, and that employees, partners and communities have the support they need to continue using this critical tool to confront the wildfire crisis," the agency said in a statement Friday. □



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Iran seizes 2 Greek tankers in Persian Gulf as tensions rise

By JON GAMBRELL and
NICHOLAS PAPHITIS

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard seized two Greek oil tankers Friday in helicopter-launched raids in the Persian Gulf, officials said.

The action appeared to be retaliation for Athens' assistance in the U.S. seizure of crude oil from an Iranian-flagged tanker this week in the Mediterranean Sea over violating Washington's crushing sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

The raid marks the first major incident at sea in months as tensions remain high between Iran and the West over its tattered nuclear deal with world powers.

As Tehran enriches more uranium, closer to weapons-grade levels than ever before, worries mount that negotiators won't find a way back to the accord raising the risk of a wider war.

The Guard issued a statement announcing the seizures, accusing the tankers of unspecified violations. Nour News, a website close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council, just a short time earlier warned that Tehran planned to take "punitive action" over Greece assisting the U.S. in seizing oil days earlier from the Iranian-flagged tanker Lana.

Greece's Foreign Ministry said it made a strong de-



The Greek-flagged oil tanker Prudent Warrior, background, is seen as it sails past Istanbul, Turkey, April 19, 2019.

Associated Press

marche to the Iranian ambassador in Athens over the "violent taking over of two Greek-flagged ships" in the Persian Gulf. "These acts effectively amount to acts of piracy," a ministry statement said.

The ministry called for the immediate release of the vessels and their crews, warning the seizure would have "particularly negative consequences" in bilateral relations and in Iran's relations with the European Union, of which Greece is a member.

An Iranian helicopter landed on the Greek-flagged Delta Poseidon in interna-

tional waters, some 22 nautical miles off the coast of Iran, the ministry said.

"Armed men then took the crew captive," it said, adding that two Greek nationals were among the crew.

"A similar incident has been reported on another Greek-flagged vessel, that was carrying seven Greek citizens, close to the coast of Iran," the ministry said.

A Greek official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss details of the attack with a journalist, identified the second ship as the Prudent Warrior. Its manager, Polembros Shipping in Greece, earlier said the

company was "cooperating with the authorities and making every possible effort to address the situation effectively."

Greek officials did not identify the nationalities of the other crew onboard the vessels.

Both vessels had come from Iraq's Basra oil terminal, loaded with crude, according to tracking data from MarineTraffic.com.

A U.S. defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence matters, said it appeared the two ships had come close to but not into Iranian territorial waters Friday.

After the hijacking, they drifted into Iranian waters. The ships also had turned off their tracking devices, another red flag, the official said. However, neither had issued a mayday or a call for help, the official said.

Iran's seizure on Friday was the latest in a string of hijackings and explosions to roil a region that includes the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of all traded oil passes. The incidents began after then-President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from Iran's nuclear deal with world powers, which saw Tehran drastically limit its enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions.

The U.S. Navy blamed Iran for a series of limpet mine attacks on vessels that damaged tankers in 2019, as well as for a fatal drone attack on an Israeli-linked oil tanker that killed two European crew members in 2021. Iranian hijackers also stormed and briefly captured a Panama-flagged asphalt tanker off the United Arab Emirates last year, as well as briefly seizing and holding a Vietnamese tanker in November.

Tehran denies carrying out the attacks, but a wider shadow war between Iran and the West has played out in the region's volatile waters. □

Racism in the ranks: Dutch police film spurs conversation

By MOLLY QUELL

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) —

A documentary about discrimination within the ranks of Dutch police has sparked a national conversation in the Netherlands about racism, with many officers and others hoping it will finally bring about change.

"The Blue Family," or "De Blauwe Familie" in Dutch, discusses a culture of bullying and fear in the national police force. It premiered on Dutch television Monday, timed around the second anniversary this week of the killing of George Floyd at the hands of Minnesota police.

"There is no way back," Peris Conrad, one of the officers featured in the film, told The Associated Press.

Born in the former Dutch colony Surinam, Conrad dreamed of being a police officer as a child. He moved to the Netherlands when he was 4 years old, and after a stint in the military, became a security guard.

While in that job, he had an encounter with police officers who were looking for information about crime in the Surinamese community. The officers encouraged him to join the force himself, which he did, ultimately spending 26 years



Peris Conrad of the Dutch police poses for a picture in Rotterdam, Netherlands, Thursday, May 26, 2022.

Associated Press

in service.

But Conrad, who is Black, recalled how in his first year at the police academy, colleagues hung a picture of him with cell bars drawn on it. The caption read: "Our monkey in a cage."

Police leaders received an early showing of the film and promised action.

"The personal stories make it painfully clear how great the impact is (of the racism), and how long it will last," Police Chief Henk van Essen said in a statement.

"We all have something to

do; not just executives, but all 65,000 colleagues. Because safety outside starts with safety inside."

"There is no room for racism and discrimination in our police," Justice Minister Dilan Yesilgöz told Dutch talk show "RTL Boulevard."

The Dutch parliament voted by a large majority this week to place police leaders under stricter supervision, citing the suicides in recent years of three officers who had complained about discrimination.

Last year, a Dutch news-

paper published messages from police group chats that showed officers making racial slurs and joking about killing non-white people.

"One less Turk" one officer wrote, in response to the slaying of a 16-year-old girl who was shot and killed by her ex-boyfriend in her high school's bicycle shed.

As in other countries, the problems in the Netherlands have a long history. A 1998 report by the Ministry of Internal Affairs said discrimination was driving out

police officers with a "migration" background - defined as having at least one parent born abroad.

While 24% of the Dutch population meets that definition, only 14% of the police force does. The National Police Corps employs some 65,000 people, and around 40,000 work as officers.

Margot Snijders has spent 30 years on the national force, including a number of years working on diversity and inclusion efforts. After years of frustration, she took a step back from that role.

"People don't trust us, and they don't want to work for us," Snijders, who also appears in "The Blue Family," told The Associated Press.

George Floyd's death in the U.S. two years ago prompted protests against racial injustice in the Netherlands and around the world.

Controle Alt Delete, an advocacy organization that pushes for better law enforcement practices, wanted to highlight problems within the Dutch police force.

The group brought on board filmmakers Maria Mok and Meral Uslu to direct and produce the documentary, which was backed by Dutch public broadcaster KRO-NCRV. □

Ex-Malaysia PM: U.S.-led trade group intended to isolate China



Malaysia's former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad adjusts an earphone before answering questions at a session of the International Conference on "The Future of Asia" Friday, May 27, 2022 in Tokyo.

Associated Press

By MARI YAMAGUCHI

Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Former Malaysian Prime Minister Ma-

hathir Mohamad criticized a new U.S.-led economic grouping on Friday, saying it is intended to isolate

China, and won't benefit regional economic growth without Beijing.

U.S. President Joe Biden launched the 13-nation Indo-Pacific Economic Framework during a visit to Japan earlier this week. He said it will help the United States work more closely with Asian countries in areas including supply chains, digital trade, clean energy and anticorruption.

"The U.S. will always want to use groupings like this in order to isolate China," Mahathir said at an international conference in Tokyo. "Many countries recognize that this is not an economic grouping but it is truly a political grouping."

The signatories are Austra-

lia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, the United States and Vietnam. Together they represent 40% of the world's GDP.

"This is not good for their own economic development," Mahathir said of the countries in the grouping.

"China is a big trading partner for Malaysia, we don't want to see any tension, any conflict with China and we hope that the U.S. will realize that China is there, it's not going to disappear, and we have to live with China, which is now richer than most countries in the world," he said at "The Future of Asia," a conference

organized by Nikkei Inc.

Later Friday, current Malaysian Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob, who is also in Tokyo, met with his Japanese counterpart, Fumio Kishida.

They welcomed the launch of the economic framework and affirmed their cooperation in areas such as digital transformation, cybersecurity, emerging technology and supply chain resilience, Japan's Foreign Ministry said.

Kishida sought Malaysia's support in achieving a "free and open" Indo-Pacific, a vision promoted by Japan and the United States as a counter to China's military and economic rise in the region, the ministry said. □

'We don't have food': African leaders meet as crises grow

By SAM MEDNICK

DJIBO, Burkina Faso (AP) —

African leaders gathered for a summit Friday in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, to address growing humanitarian needs on the continent, which is also facing increased violent extremism, climate change challenges and a run of military coups.

Leaders called for increased mobilization to resolve a humanitarian crisis that has left millions displaced and more than 280 million suffering from malnourishment.

For people in Djibo, a town in northern Burkina Faso near the border with Mali, any help can't come soon enough.

The city in the Sahel region the large expanse below the Sahara Desert -- has been besieged since February by jihadis who prevent people and goods from moving in or out and cut water supplies. Few truckers want to run the jihadist gauntlet. Residents are suffering with no food or water, animals are dying and the price of grain has spiked.

"The goods are not arriving anymore here. Animal and agricultural production is not possible because the people cannot go back to their villages," U.N. resident and humanitarian coordinator Barbara Manzi told The Associated Press from Djibo this week. "Unless (a solution) is found, it's going



Internally displaced people wait for aid in Djibo, Burkina Faso, Thursday May 26, 2022.

Associated Press

to be really a tragedy for the entire group of people that are here."

Djibo has been at the epicenter of the violence linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group that has killed thousands and displaced nearly 2 million people. While Djibo and Soum province where the town is located experienced periods of calm, such as during a makeshift ceasefire between jihadis and the government surrounding the 2020 presidential election, the truce didn't last.

Since November, insecurity in the region has increased. Jihadis have destroyed water infrastructure in the town

and lined much of Djibo's perimeter with explosives, blockading the city, say locals. The town's population has swollen from 60,000 to 300,000 over the last few years as people flee the countryside to escape the violence.

Blockading cities is a tactic used by jihadis to assert dominance and could also be an attempt to get Burkina Faso's new military junta, which seized power in January, to backtrack on promises to eliminate the jihadis, said Laith Alkhouri, CEO of Intelonyx Intelligence Advisory, a group that provides intelligence analysis.

"Militants resort to block-

ading when they see an opportunity to gain incentives in negotiating with the government and simultaneously send a message to their base that they are in control. It's a bargaining card and a winning one," he said.

A U.N. team flew in briefly to assess the situation. The AP was the first foreign media to visit the town in more than a year.

"Today there is nothing to buy here. Even if you have cash, there is nothing to buy.

We came here with four donkeys and goats and some of them died because of hunger.

We were forced to sell the

rest of the animals and unfortunately prices of animals have decreased," said cattle owner Mamoudou Oumarou.

The 53-year-old father of 13 fled his village in February and said the blockade in Djibo has prevented people from coming to the market to buy and sell cattle, decreasing demand and lowering prices for the animals by half.

Before the violence, Djibo had one of the biggest and most vital cattle markets in the Sahel and was a bustling economic hub. Some 600 trucks used to enter Djibo monthly, now it's less than 70, said Alpha Ousmane Dao, director of Seracom, a local aid group in Djibo.

Burkina Faso is facing its worst hunger crisis in six years, more than 630,000 people are on the brink of starvation, according to the UN.

As a result of Djibo's blockade, the World Food Program has been unable to deliver food to the town since December and stocks are running out, said Antoine Renard, country director for the World Food Program in Burkina Faso.

Efforts to end the blockade through dialogue have had mixed results. At the end of April, the emir of Djibo met with Burkina Faso's top jihadist, Jafar Dicko, to negotiate lifting the siege. However, little progress has been made since then. □

Biden renews sanctions license for Chevron in Venezuela

By JOSHUA GOODMAN

Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — The Biden administration has renewed a license partially exempting Chevron from sanctions on Venezuela so it can keep operating in the oil-rich, socialist-run nation.

The license issued Friday by the U.S. Treasury Department allows the California-based Chevron and other U.S. companies to perform only basic upkeep of wells it operates jointly with state-run oil giant PDVSA, dashing the hopes of

those who wanted to see a resumption of exports to ease pricing pressure at American pumps.

Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine and ensuing international sanctions targeting Russia's oil industry have led the Biden administration to reconsider long-standing policies isolating two other oil powers: Venezuela and Iran.

In March, three senior Biden officials traveled to Caracas to meet with President Nicolás Maduro to try to lure him back to

negotiations with the U.S.-backed opposition and release several Americans imprisoned for years.

Their carrot: the possible lifting of crippling oil sanctions imposed in 2019 after Maduro breezed into a second term following elections considered undemocratic by the U.S. and dozens of allies. While Maduro has welcomed the surprise outreach, joking that he wanted to soon travel to New York to attend a salsa festival, there's been little progress since. □



Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro arrives to Revolution Palace to attend the XXI ALBA Summit in Havana, Cuba, Friday, May 27, 2022.

Associated Press

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PALM BEACH - Don't spend a single moment of your long awaited holiday in Aruba thinking about your return testing. The Covid Test Center Aruba located at the Paseo Herencia Mall is your travel ally. Just sit back and relax knowing that, when the time comes, their professional staff will make this process a breeze for you. No need to make an appointment or dread the nasal swab; you'll be done with it in a matter of minutes and back to fun stuff.

Some regions require proof or certification of negative COVID-19 status before allowing people into or out of the country. With rules and guidelines varying greatly from country to country, the safest ap-

proach is to have recent proof you are COVID-19 negative before you get to the airport. Covid Test Center @ Paseo provides both PCR and Antigen type testing with results within hours; and both are accepted by the CDC. Covid Test Center @ Paseo is conveniently located at the Paseo Herencia Mall in the heart of the Palm Beach Strip and right across from the Playa Linda and Holiday Inn hotels; only two doors from T.G.I. Friday's. We are open seven days a week, between 9 am and 9 pm. This gives you the choice to walk in when it better suits you. It can be at the start or at the end of your day. No appointment needed here. The friendly technicians at Covid Test Center @ Paseo will take your

information as we are aware it is imperative that this shows accurately on the results. For a seamless process, please verify that you have provided the correct email to deliver the certificate. Said certificate can be printed at our offices should you wish to do so. We understand that nobody enjoys doing a nasal swab. That is why we take pride in our reputation of being the gentlest swabbers on the island. First, we will not rush you just to go to the next in line. Through clear given instructions we want you to feel comfortable. When you are ready, we will promptly but tenderly take a proper sample. Many elsewhere traumatized people praise the difference it makes to test with us.

Forget about counting hours before your flight, our turnaround is fast! For travel to the US, for example, a day before will suffice. A great game plan is to test first, then head out for an evening of dining, shopping and entertainment at the Paseo Herencia Mall, home of the water and lights show in the evenings. By the time you are back at the hotel, your results will be ready in your inbox. A PCR test costs \$75 and results are ready the next day, while Antigen test costs \$35 with same day results. If you are staying at an off-high-rise area property, you can benefit from the free parking our customers receive at the mall lot.). For more information follow us on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. □

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Guests thank Hilton for outstanding service

A guest wrote to us thanking employees from Hilton Aruba for their outstanding service.

Ann Cuti, Matilde, Irma, Afrose, Mercedes, JoAnne Gribbin, Thank you ladies, for making our stay incredible!"

The guest wrote, "Mary-



Teamwork gets the job done!

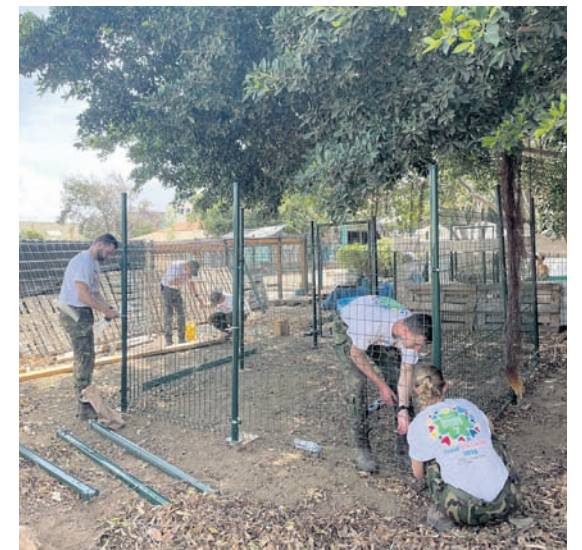


The last part of the cadets service to the community was successfully done.

Recently, around 20 cadets of Aruba rolled up their sleeves to give a hand at two different locations in Aruba.

At Ambiente Feliz Foundation, the exterior walls received one more and last coat of paint, while at Sgt Peppers, a whole new residence was built.

At both locations, the residents were more than happy with the help from these cadets, and the result of their hard work.



Consumer Price Index, base period June 2019 April 2022

Table 2 Percentage change by sector

Sector	Weight coefficient	Effect Mar-Apr	Percentage changes			
			Monthly Mar-Apr	Year-to-date Dec-Apr	End of period Apr 21-Apr 22	Period average Apr 21-Apr 22
CPI	10,000.0	0.68	0.7	1.5	4.7	2.6
01. Food and non-alcoholic beverages	1,087.7	0.17	1.5	3.6	8.3	2.9
02. Alcoholic beverages and tobacco	78.2	0.00	0.1	1.9	3.4	1.2
03. Clothing and footwear	276.8	-0.25	-9.0	-3.1	10.2	0.4
04. Housing	2,522.2	-0.04	-0.2	0.1	0.2	0.8
05. Household operation	929.2	-0.16	-1.7	-4.8	1.8	1.2
06. Health	223.1	-0.06	-2.9	-2.7	-4.1	-2.9
07. Transport	1,257.4	1.04	7.5	14.6	20.1	14.4
08. Communications	849.6	-0.01	-0.1	-1.6	-2.5	-0.8
09. Recreation and culture	1,013.3	-0.04	-0.4	-2.3	4.2	0.6
10. Education	98.0	0.00	0.0	0.0	4.6	3.5
11. Restaurants and hotels	442.0	0.03	0.5	3.0	6.0	2.2
12. Miscellaneous goods and services	1,222.6	-0.01	0.0	0.1	2.4	0.9

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics Aruba

The Central Bureau of Statistics presents the most important findings for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the month of April 2022.

Consumer Price Index for the month of April 2022

The CPI for April 2022 is 102.16, an increase of 0.7% compared to the index of March 2022 (101.47) and accumulating an increase of 1.5% up to and including April of this year. The percentage change of the CPI over the last twelve (12) months (April 2021 to April 2022) is 4.7, an increase of 5.1 percentage points (ppts) compared to the percentage change for the same period of last year (-0.4%).

The period average percentage change of the CPI for the period April 2021 - April 2022 is 2.6%, an increase of 4.9 ppts compared to the period average percentage change over the period April 2020 - April 2021 (-2.3%). During this month, four (4) of the twelve (12) sectors registered increases in prices. The increases that had the greatest influence on the CPI were registered for the "Transport" (7.5%) and "Food and non-alcoholic beverages" (1.5%) sectors, which contributed with an effect of 1.04 and 0.17 ppts, respectively. The increases in the remaining sectors had an effect of 0.03 ppts on the CPI of April 2022. Aforementioned increases were partially offset mainly by decreases in the indices for the "Clothing and footwear" (-9.0%) and "Household operation" (1.7%) sectors, causing an effect of -0.25 and -0.16 ppts, respectively. The decreases in the remaining sectors had an effect of -0.15 ppts on the CPI of April 2022. The increase in the "Transport" sector was mainly due to an increase in the category "Operation of personal transport equipment" (7.7%), which contributed to an effect of 0.68.

The increase in the "Food and non-alcoholic beverages" sector was mainly due to an increase in the category "Food" (1.7%), which contributed to an effect of 0.16 ppts. The decrease in the "Clothing and footwear" sector was mainly due to a decrease in the category "Clothing" (-9.0%), which contributed to an effect of -0.19 ppts.

The decrease in the "Household operation" sector was mainly due to a decrease in the category "Household appliances" (-8.0%), which contributed to an effect of -0.21 ppts. Consumption basket The consumption basket of the CPI consists of 408 goods and services. Compared to March 2022, 44.6% of these products

had an increase in price, causing an effect of 1.84 ppts, while 40.4% showed a decrease, contributing to an effect of -1.17 ppts and the remaining 15.0% had no change in price. The prices of goods increased by 0.8% and caused an influence of 0.49 ppts. The prices of services showed an increase of 0.5% and had an influence of 0.19 ppts on the CPI of April 2022. Core inflation The CPIC (core inflation) - CPI excluding the effect of energy and food - was 1.2% in April 2022.

The energy index - which consists of the products: electricity, water, gasoline and diesel - was 8.8%. The food index showed an increase of 3.0%. Subsistence level The subsistence level for a household consisting of two (2) adults and two (2) children (aged 0-14 years) in April 2022 is Afl. 5,003, an increase of Afl. 253 compared to April 2021 (Afl. 4,750). The subsistence level for a single adult household is Afl. 2,382, an increase of Afl. 120 compared to April 2021 (Afl. 2,262).

The energy index - which consists of the products: electricity, water, gasoline and diesel - was 8.8%. The food index showed an increase of 3.0%. Subsistence level The subsistence level for a household consisting of two (2) adults and two (2) children (aged 0-14 years) in April 2022 is Afl. 5,003, an increase of Afl. 253 compared to April 2021 (Afl. 4,750). The subsistence level for a single adult household is Afl. 2,382, an increase of Afl. 120 compared to April 2021 (Afl. 2,262).

Change in prices of crude

Table 1 Overview percentage change of the CPI

	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22
Index	97.57	97.39	98.09	98.53	98.84	99.24	99.31	99.90	100.60	100.07	100.44	101.47	102.16
Monthly	0.0	-0.2	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.6	0.7	-0.5	0.4	1.0	0.7
Year-to-date	0.5	0.3	1.1	1.5	1.8	2.2	2.3	2.9	3.6	-0.5	-0.2	0.9	1.5
End of period	-0.4	-0.2	1.0	1.8	1.4	2.2	2.4	3.1	3.6	3.3	3.5	4.0	4.7
Period average	-2.3	-2.2	-1.8	-1.4	-1.1	-0.7	-0.3	0.2	0.7	1.2	1.7	2.1	2.6
Goods	1.2	-0.4	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.9	-0.7	0.7	1.4	-0.6	0.1	1.6	0.8
Services	-0.1	0.2	0.8	0.0	0.2	-0.2	1.1	0.5	-0.2	-0.5	0.7	0.2	0.5
CPIC	-1.4	-1.7	-1.6	-1.4	-1.3	-1.2	-0.9	-0.7	-0.3	0.1	0.5	0.8	1.2
Energy	-6.1	-4.1	-2.4	-0.9	0.6	2.0	3.4	5.1	6.7	7.5	8.2	8.7	8.8
Food	-2.6	-2.6	-2.5	-2.3	-2.1	-1.7	-1.4	-0.9	-0.3	0.4	1.2	2.0	3.0
1 adult	2,262	2,263	2,271	2,293	2,294	2,304	2,311	2,331	2,337	2,343	2,348	2,372	2,382
2 adults + 2 children	4,750	4,752	4,770	4,815	4,817	4,839	4,854	4,896	4,907	4,920	4,931	4,980	5,003

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics Aruba

oil, utilities, gasoline and diesel in April 2022

The prices of utilities (electricity and water), gasoline and diesel are for the greater part determined by international crude oil prices. In April 2022 the average price per barrel of crude oil (US\$ 102.29) had a decrease of US\$ 6.29 (-5.8%) compared to March 2022 (US\$ 108.58). The prices of electricity and water did not change compared to March 2022. Subsequently, the average electricity price per household remained at Afl. 240.09, while the average price of water per household remained at Afl. 137.05.

In April 2022 the price of gasoline registered an increase of Afl. 30.00 cents (11.5%) and had an effect of 0.61 ppts on the CPI. The price of diesel registered an increase of Afl. 45.70 cents (20.0%) and had an effect of 0.07 ppts on the CPI of April 2022. In April 2022, utilities, gasoline and diesel as a group showed an increase in price of 4.1% compared to March 2022, and had an influence of 0.68 ppts on the CPI, while the remaining 404 goods and services, as a group, were unchanged and had no effect on the CPI.

Change in prices of Food & catering services in April 2022

The "Food & catering services" index showed an increase of 1.2% in April 2022, after an increase of 0.6% in March 2022. The index for "Food at home" showed an increase of 1.5% in April, as nine (9) of the eleven

(11) "Food at home" indices increased in April 2022. The "Bread and cereals" index registered the largest increase (3.9%) in April 2022. Furthermore, other significant increases were posted in the indices for "Fish and other seafood" (3.7%), "Milk, cheese and eggs" (2.7%), "Vegetables" (2.5%) and "Sugar, jam, honey and other confectionery" (1.8%). The only decreases were registered in the indices of "Potatoes and other tubers" (-2.8%) and "Fruit" (-0.7%).

Over the last twelve (12) months, the "Food & catering services" has increased by 7.5%. The "Food at home" index showed an increase of 8.3%, where all of the "Food at home" indices increased over the last year. The "Oils and fats" index increased by 21.1%, the largest increase among the "Food at home" food groups. Furthermore, other significant increases were posted in the indices for "Fruit" (11.8%), "Meat" (9.3%), "Bread and cereals" (9.1%) and "Fish and other seafood" (8.6%). The index for "Food away from home" increased by 0.5% in April 2022 and has increased by 5.5% over the last twelve (12) months. In April 2022, "Food at home" and "Food away from home" as a group showed an increase in price of 1.2% compared to March 2022, and had an influence of 0.19 ppts on the CPI, while the remaining goods and services, as a group, experienced an increase in price of 0.6%, causing an effect of 0.49 ppts on the CPI.

This refreshing airline amenity is making a comeback

By **SALLY FRENCH of Nerd-Wallet**

For those among us who like a tippie after takeoff, consider this a sign that the world is healing: Many airlines are resuming in-flight meals and alcohol service. Early on in the pandemic, many airlines completely cut in-flight refreshment offerings (aside from perhaps a hasty water bottle delivery). Slowly but surely, airlines are reintroducing the amenity.

For example, in 2020, Southwest Airlines cut service completely on short flights and offered only water and a prepackaged snack on longer flights. In 2021, Southwest reintroduced a small selection of nonalcoholic drinks to all flights. It wasn't until February 2022 that its complete pre-pandemic beverage menu returned, which included more soda and juice choices plus alcoholic beverages for an additional cost.

Other airlines moved a bit more quickly.

By July 2020, Delta Air Lines was offering beer cans and single-serve wine bottles. It wasn't until March 2022 that it brought back hot meals for its Delta One and first class customers on some flights.

WHY DID IN-FLIGHT ALCOHOL GET THE AX?

It's hard to peg just one reason why alcohol and hot meals disappeared on flights during the COVID-19 era. For some, it eliminated unnecessary lingering in the aisles while flight attendants took everyone's orders.

Others point to unprecedented rates of unruly passenger reports as the reason to remove alcohol in particular. In 2021, the Federal Aviation Administration initiated 1,099 investigations around unruly passengers. That's up from just 183 in 2020, 149 in 2019 and 146 investigations in 2018, according to FAA data. And not all bad behavior yields an investigation. In 2021, the FAA received reports of 4,290 mask-related incidents and 5,981 unruly passenger reports.

While it's unclear how



In this Feb. 18, 2021 file photo, a passenger waits for a Delta Airlines flight at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in Atlanta.

many of those cases involved alcohol (or how many more there might be if alcohol was accessible), flight attendants suggest a correlation.

An online survey of 5,000 flight attendants in summer 2021 by the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, a union, showed that mask compliance and alcohol were among the most common factors in unruly passenger interactions. Additionally, 17% of respondents reported experiencing at least one physical incident with a passenger. Some suspect the reason in-flight beverages got the boot comes down to money. Airlines have sought to cut costs by culling refreshments long before the pandemic. For instance, Frontier Airlines discontinued serving warm, gooey cookies on its flights back in 2012, stating that fresh cookie service "does not align with either the perception or financial reality of the ultra low-cost business model," according to a memo obtained by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Today, refreshments are available on Frontier flights for purchase, but there are no freebies.

These days, travelers say

that while service has largely returned, it's still been significantly reduced.

"Pre-COVID, United Airlines would always offer a drink before takeoff, and flight attendants would continue to offer drinks during the flight," says David Decker, an insurance executive and United Million Miler member.

"Currently, the flight attendants make the rounds after the plane has reached cruising altitude, but you are hard-pressed to find a flight attendant for a refill. I've seen some passengers even resort to ringing the flight attendant bell."

HOW TO SAVE MONEY ON IN-FLIGHT BEVERAGES

If you want to save money on in-flight refreshments, then the typical advice of "pack your own snacks" likely won't apply on airplanes. You can't bring liquids greater than 3.4 ounces through the Transportation Security Administra-

tion checkpoint, so unless you're drinking a straight espresso shot, there aren't a lot of beverage options you'll be allowed to get past security.

You can't sneak through your own small stashes of liquor, either; FAA regulations prohibit passengers from drinking alcohol on the aircraft unless it's served by a flight attendant.

These days, unless you're flying a budget airline, you'll likely no longer have to spend \$6 on a soda in the airport terminal just to satisfy your carbonation cravings. If you can wait until after takeoff, you could get it all as part of the cost of your airfare.

And as far as adult beverages go, here are additional ways to save.

LOOK FOR OLD AIRLINE COUPONS

Some airlines offer coupons for in-flight snacks and drinks to loyal customers. And though they tend

to have expiration dates, many of those have been extended. For example, Southwest drink coupons that were set to expire in 2020 or 2021 (and can be redeemed for an alcoholic beverage) now don't expire until Dec. 31, 2022.

FLY FIRST CLASS (FOR FREE)

You're unlikely to be offered a free adult beverage in economy, but you will in the premium seats. On Delta, all Delta Comfort+ and first class customers receive complimentary beer and wine service. United offers complimentary alcoholic beverages in premium cabins, and Alaska Airlines offers complimentary alcohol in first class.

Premium cabins typically aren't cheap if you're paying a cash fare, but you might be able to finagle your way to an upgrade. There are a few tricks to getting a free upgrade on your flight, such as through holding airline elite status.

Early on in the pandemic, chasing elite status might not have been a smart money move given that many were traveling less and that perks were reduced. But while earning airline elite status is not exactly a walk in the park, it might be worth it these days if you travel often and fully use the benefits (like actually consuming in-flight alcohol).

USE AIRLINE CREDIT CARD INCIDENTAL CREDITS

Many premium travel credit cards offer statement credits toward airline incidental fees. These fees are additional qualifying charges from your preferred airline beyond the actual airfare. What's considered a qualifying purchase can vary by credit card issuer, but they typically include checked bags, seat upgrades and yes in-flight refreshments. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 39 — Island
 - 1 Deep ravine
 - 6 Mal-function
 - 11 Dutch capital, with "The"
 - 12 Shrek's love
 - 13 Burglar's bane
 - 14 Become narrower
 - 15 Have done, as a portrait
 - 17 Genesis name
 - 18 Summer, to Simone
 - 19 "Ocean's Eleven" and "Cape Fear"
 - 22 — Moines
 - 23 Old deliverer
 - 24 Tennis star Osaka
 - 25 Twin of Artemis
 - 27 Braying beast
 - 30 Ad buyer
 - 31 By way of
 - 32 Avril follower
 - 33 Track sport
 - 35 Bitter
 - 38 Prod into action
- DOWN**
- 1 Pursued
 - 2 Rock salt
 - 3 Some marbles
 - 4 Ride the waves
 - 5 Tangible tributes
 - 6 Back, at sea
 - 7 Snoop grp.
 - 8 Midwest state capital
 - 9 Crooked
 - 10 Trims
 - 16 Dye, say
 - 20 Notes
 - 21 Bordeaux buddy
 - 24 Sine qua —
 - 25 Cochise's people
 - 26 "Death on the Nile" sleuth
 - 27 With enthusiasm
 - 28 Un-attached
 - 29 Most wise
 - 30 Stylish
 - 34 Pool tools
 - 36 Chapel reply
 - 37 Lair

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Yesterday's answer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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13					14				
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18				19	20	21			
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41					42				

5-28

A X Y D L B A A X R
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-28

CRYPTOQUOTE

J L A H U B S M H L Y J C Z L N I H

I D R D W J H L Z S N D Y B Z L N E U Y V

D Y H Y H E C U Y S L D Z N U H Y X .

— E D N S U Y J T S M H N O U Y V , Q N .
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: A LESSON TAUGHT
WITH HUMOR IS A LESSON RETAINED.
— DR. RUTH WESTHEIMER

Stars and royalty watch ABBA's return in digital stage show



Members of ABBA, from left, Bjorn Ulvaeus, Agnetha Faltskog, Anni-Frid Lyngstad and Benny Andersson arrive for the ABBA Voyage concert at the ABBA Arena in London, Thursday May 26, 2022.

Associated Press

By JILL LAWLESS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — "ABBA Voyage" is certainly a trip. Four decades after the Swedish pop supergroup last performed live, audiences can once again see ABBA onstage in an innovative digital concert where past and future collide. The show opens to the public in London on Friday, the day after a red-carpet premiere attended by superfans, celebrities and Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia. The guests of honor were pop royalty the four members of ABBA, appearing in public together for the first time in years.

They were in the audience, though. Onstage at the specially built 3,000-seat ABBA Arena next to east London's Olympic Park were a 10-piece live backing band and a digital ABBA, created using motion capture and other technology by Industrial Light and Magic, the special effects firm founded by "Star Wars" director George Lucas.

The voices and movements

are the real Agnetha Faltskog, Björn Ulvaeus, Benny Andersson and Anni-Frid Lyngstad choreographed by Britain's Wayne McGregor but the performers onstage are digital avatars, inevitably dubbed "ABBA-tars." In unsettlingly realistic detail, they depict the band members as they looked in their 1970s heyday beards on the men, flowing locks on the women, velour pantsuits all around.

The result is both high tech and high camp, a glittery supernova of stupefying technology, 1970s nostalgia and pop music genius. For many in the audience, it was almost like being taken back in time to watch ABBA perform classics including "Mamma Mia," "Knowing Me, Knowing You," "SOS" and "Dancing Queen." The peppy 90-minute set also includes tracks from "Voyage," the reunion album the band released last year.

It's a fusion of tribute act and 3D concert movie that transcends that description. At times it was possible to forget this wasn't a

live performance, though when the backing singers stepped forward to belt out "Does Your Mother Know," a surge of live-music energy shot through the arena. The four band members two married couples though now long divorced got a rapturous ovation when they took a bow at the end of Thursday's show, 50 years after they formed ABBA, and 40 years after they stopped performing live.

Watching one's younger self perform must be a strange sensation, but the band members, now in their 70s, said they were delighted by the show. "I never knew I had such amazing moves," Ulvaeus said.

Lyngstad agreed: "I thought I was quite good, but I'm even better." Ulvaeus said the audience reaction was the most gratifying part of the experience. "There's an emotional connection between the avatars and the audience," he said. "That's the fantastic thing."

Producers bill the show as "revolutionary." Time will tell. Like the first audiences to watch a talking motion picture a century ago, attendees may leave wondering whether they are watching a gimmick, or the future. The Times of London reviewer Will Hodgkinson judged the show "essentially an ABBA singalong with added sound and light show," though he called the effect "captivating." Writing in The Guardian, Alexis Petridis called the concert "jaw-dropping" and said "it's so successful that it's hard not to imagine other artists following suit." Gimmick or genius, "ABBA Voyage" is booking in London until May 2023, with a world tour planned after that. The fans who attended Thursday's show are just delighted ABBA is back. "I'm so excited," said Kristina Hagman, a Swede who has been a fan since the 1970s. □

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California parents could soon sue for social media addiction

By **ADAM BEAM**
Associated Press
SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)

— California could soon hold social media companies responsible for harming children who have become addicted to their products, permitting parents to sue platforms like Instagram and TikTok for up to \$25,000 per violation under a bill that passed the state Assembly on Monday. The bill defines "addiction" as kids under 18 who are both harmed either physically, mentally, emotionally, developmentally or materially and who want to stop or reduce how much time they spend on social media but they can't because they are preoccupied or obsessed with it.

Business groups have warned that if the bill passes, social media companies would most likely cease operations for children in California rather than face the legal risk.

The proposal would only apply to social media companies that had at least \$100 million in gross revenue in the past year, appearing to take aim at social media giants like Facebook and others that dominate the marketplace.

It would not apply to streaming services like Netflix and Hulu or to companies that only offer email and text messaging services.

"The era of unfettered social experimentation on children is over and we will

protect kids," said Assemblymember Jordan Cunningham, a Republican from San Luis Obispo County and author of the bill. Monday's vote is a key but not final step for the legislation. The bill now heads to the state Senate, where it will undergo weeks of hearings and negotiations among lawmakers and advocates. But Monday's vote keeps the bill alive this year.

The bill gives social media companies two paths to escape liability in the courts. If the bill becomes law, it would take effect on Jan. 1. Companies that remove features deemed addictive to children by April 1 would not be responsible for damages. Also, companies that conduct regular audits of their practices to identify and remove features that could be addictive to children would be immune from lawsuits.

Despite those provisions, business groups have opposed the bill. TechNet, a bipartisan network of technology CEOs and senior executives, wrote in a letter to lawmakers that if the bill becomes law "social media companies and online web services would have no choice but to cease operations for kids under 18 and would implement stringent age-verification in order to ensure that ado-



Assemblyman Jordon Cunningham, R-San Luis Obispo, right, smiles after his bill to hold social media companies responsible for harming children who have become addicted to their products was approved by the Assembly at the Capitol in Sacramento, Calif., on Monday, May 23, 2022.

Associated Press

lescents did not use their sites." "There is no social media company let alone any business that could tolerate that legal risk," the group wrote.

Lawmakers appeared willing to change the part of the bill that allows parents to sue social media companies, but none offered a detailed alternative. Instead, supporters urged their colleagues to pass the bill on Monday to continue the conversation about the issue in the state Capitol. Assemblymember Ken Cooley, a Democrat from Rancho Cordova, said as a lawyer he normally opposes bills that create more opportunities for lawsuits.

But he said lawmakers must "change the dynamics of what is surrounding us, surrounding our kids."

"We have to do something," he said. "If it doesn't turn out right we can modify as we go along." □



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Rafa vs. Uncle Toni: Nadal to meet Auger-Aliassime in Paris

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**
AP Tennis Writer

PARIS (AP) — Rafael Nadal knew this was bound to happen. So, too, did his uncle, Toni Nadal, who coached Rafael to most of the nephew's men's-record 21 Grand Slam titles.

Also well aware this moment would come, of course, was Felix Auger-Aliassime, the promising player who brought aboard the man known to many simply as Uncle Toni for some extra assistance last year.

Once Toni and Rafael ended their professional partnership, and once Auger-Aliassime hired Toni to work in tandem with full-time coach Frederic Fontang, they all figured that somewhere, sometime, their paths would cross. Now it'll happen in the French Open's fourth round: Nadal vs. Auger-Aliassime. Which in some ways is also a matchup of Nadal vs. Nadal.

So, the 13-time champion at Roland Garros was asked, might there be some awkwardness there? Probably no way you'll be chatting with your uncle ahead of Sunday's meeting against the ninth-seeded Auger-Aliassime, a 21-year-old from Canada, right?

Nadal shook his head and said he already had spoken to Toni straight after beating 26th-seeded Botic Van De Zandschulp 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 on Friday.

"For me, it's very simple.



Spain's Rafael Nadal returns the ball to Netherlands' Botic van de Zandschulp during their third round match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium Friday, May 27, 2022 in Paris.

Associated Press

He's my uncle. I don't think he will be able to want me to lose, without a doubt, but he's a professional and he's with another player," said the fifth-seeded Nadal, who has dealt with chronic foot pain and a rib injury this season but also won the Australian Open in January.

"It's not a story at all for me. I know what the feelings are that we have between each other. I know he wants the best for me. Now he's helping another player," he said. "But honestly, for me, it's zero problem."

Auger-Aliassime, meanwhile, resolved one little bit of intrigue, saying that

he expected Uncle Toni to sit in a neutral spot in the stands, rather than being forced to choose between one player's guest box or the other.

As for what sort of insights Toni might reveal about his former player to his current one, Auger-Aliassime smiled.

Not too many unknowns about Rafael at this point, not at age 35, not after so many years on tour.

"I know him. I've seen him play. I know what he does well. We all know," said Auger-Aliassime, a 2021 U.S. Open semifinalist who advanced Friday by defeating Filip Krajinovic 7-6 (3), 7-6 (2), 7-5.

"But nobody Toni, Fred or me has the answers," he said.

On the horizon is the prospect that if Nadal wins, he could find yet another familiar face in the stadium for the quarterfinals: defending champion Novak Djokovic.

Both the top-seeded Djokovic, who beat Aljaz Bedene 6-3, 6-3, 6-2 on Friday and now takes on 15th-seeded Diego Schwartzman, and Nadal have won all nine sets they've played on the red clay of Paris so far. And both have ceded just 23 games total.

They have played each other 58 times already, more than any two other

men in the Open era, and No. 59 might come next week.

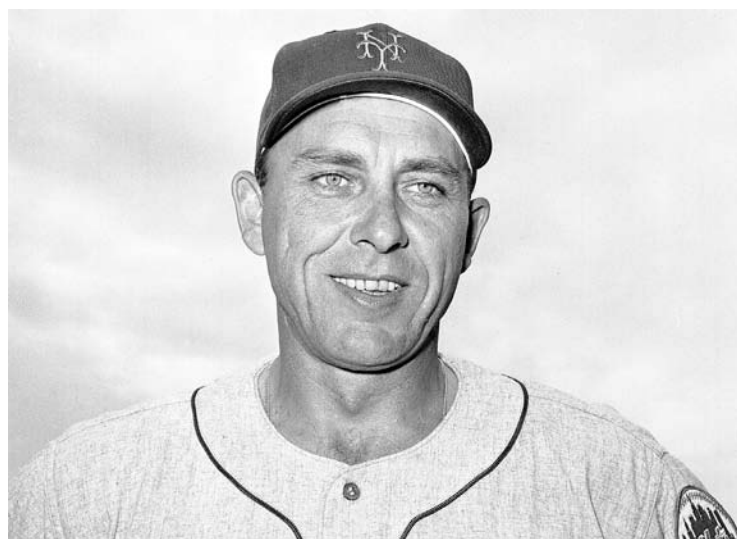
Asked earlier in the tournament about that "pretty good lefty in your quarter of the draw," Djokovic played dumb and joked: "I don't know who you are talking about."

Also on their half of the bracket: No. 6 Carlos Alcaraz, a 19-year-old who leads the tour with four titles in 2022 and became, at the Madrid Open this month, the only player in history to beat both Djokovic and Nadal at the same clay-court event.

Alcaraz was facing 21-year-old American Sebastian Korda on Friday night in Court Philippe Chatrier, with the winner to play No. 10 Cameron Norrie or No. 21 Karen Khachanov in the fourth round. Another Sunday match will be No. 3 Alexander Zverev vs. Bernabe Zapata Miralles, a qualifier who edged No. 23 John Isner of the U.S. in five sets.

Three American women reached the fourth round: 18-year-old Coco Gauff, 20-year-old Amanda Anisimova and 2017 U.S. Open champion Sloane Stephens.

Gauff, the youngest player left in the field, was a 6-3, 6-4 winner against the oldest, Kaia Kanepi of Estonia, who at 36 is twice her age. Kanepi won the French Open junior title in 2001 — three years before Gauff was born. □



New York Mets' Gil Hodges smiles in March 1963. Gil Hodges, who helped the Dodgers win World Series titles in Brooklyn and Los Angeles, will have his No. 14 jersey retired.

Associated Press

Dodgers to retire Gil Hodges' No. 14 in June

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Gil Hodges, who helped the Dodgers win World Series titles in Brooklyn and Los Angeles, will have his No. 14 jersey retired.

The pregame ceremony will take place on June 4, when the New York Mets visit Dodger Stadium. Hodges played his final two seasons with the Mets in 1962 and '63. His 96-year-old widow, Joan, still lives in Brooklyn.

He joins Walter Alston, Roy Campanella, Don Drysdale, Jim Gilliam, Sandy Koufax, Tommy Lasorda, Jackie Robinson, Duke Snider, Don Sutton and Pee Wee Reese among Dodgers players and managers to have their numbers retired in left field.

Hodges will be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame on July 24.

He was voted in by the veterans committee.

During his 16 years with the Dodgers in Brooklyn and Los Angeles, Hodges helped the team win World Series titles in 1955 and '59. He was an eight-time All-Star. From 1949-55, he drove in over 100 runs per season.

Hodges died in 1972 at age 47, when he was managing the Mets.

He guided the team to the 1969 World Series title. □

Tank vs talk: Gervonta Davis aims to quiet challenger Romero

By BRIAN MAHONEY

NEW YORK (AP) — If this was about trading insults, Gervonta Davis might not be the better man this time. Rolando Romero can talk and has been doing plenty of it leading into their match Saturday night, profanely poking fun at everything from the quality of Davis' resume to the size of his head.

When it comes to trading punches, Davis insists it will be a different story in a heated lightweight title matchup of unbeatens in Brooklyn.

"I feel as though the talking is over. The time is now," Davis said.

He has been doing this much longer, not just at the highest levels of boxing, but in the sport itself. When it's time to stop jabbering and start jabbing, he believes there will be a big difference against a fighter who's had only about half as many professional fights. The bout headlines a Showtime pay-per-view card and the first big boxing event back in Brooklyn since the pandemic started more than two years ago. Barclays Center is where Davis (26-0, 24 KOs) won his first title in 2017, and he has gone on to draw big crowds from coast to coast while winning titles in three different weight classes.

At 27, he has built himself into one of the biggest names in boxing, though



Gervonta Davis celebrates during a WBA Super Lightweight world championship boxing match against Mario Barrios on Sunday, June 27, 2021, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

Romero (14-0, 12 KOs) contends he did it by beating up on smaller fighters, or carefully chosen opponents who lack his power. Romero has boasted that he will knock out Davis in one round. He didn't back away from that when asked what he envisions happening Saturday night. "Tank flatlined on the ground," he said.

Davis seems alternately annoyed and amused by the antics of the 26-year-old Romero, who is on the brink of the biggest night of a boxing career that isn't even 10 years old. He

only took up the sport after switching from judo at 17, giving Davis a significant advantage in ring rounds. Davis seemed frustrated enough by Romero to push his opponent off the stage at their weigh-in Friday, forcing the fighters to be separated.

"There's definitely different levels when you come to the sport of boxing," Davis said. "There's people that play with boxing and there's people that've been doing this since they were kids. You've got somebody that's been doing this since they were 7 and somebody

that's been doing this since they were 17. Like, come on, bro. It's time to show that I'm one of the ones." They were scheduled to fight in December before Romero was taken off the card while authorities investigated accusations of sexual assault against him. No charges were filed. Romero claims they were supposed to share the ring before that, but Davis twice backed out of plans to spar with him. He said Davis is scared of him and believes he saw more fear against Isaac Cruz, the replacement opponent Da-

vis fought in Los Angeles. Davis won that fight by unanimous decision, ending a streak of stoppages that began in 2015. Romero said Cruz hit Davis easily and believes the Baltimore native will be target practice for his power punches. "There's no way I can miss," Romero said. "He has a big-ass head."

Both fighters are promoted by Mayweather Promotions, where Davis has long been the big star, considered a worthy successor to Floyd Mayweather. He'll have to make room — or move out of the way — for Romero if the challenger fights as good as he talks. Romero's martial arts background has given him a reputation of an awkward fighter in the way he punches, but Davis just sees an undeveloped one.

Mastering the microphone helped Romero land a spot in the main event of a pay-per-view after just 14 fights, but experience isn't required to hype a fight. It makes a big difference when the words stop and the punching starts. Once that's done, Davis is confident there won't be anything left for Romero to talk about.

"What we're going to find out on Saturday night is that, the person who's dishing it, can they take it?" Mayweather Promotions CEO Leonard Ellerbe said. □

Country star Blake Shelton named Indy 500 grand marshal

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Blake Shelton will lend his voice to the Indianapolis 500 as the grand marshal for Sunday's race.

The country music star and coach on NBC's "The Voice," Shelton will give the traditional command for drivers to report to their cars during the official pre-race ceremonies. Shelton has a lengthy association with auto racing and served last weekend as the grand marshal for NASCAR's All-Star race.

He also played a pre-race concert at Texas Motor Speedway.

Shelton also collaborated with Indianapolis 500 rookie and seven-time NASCAR champion -- Jimmie Johnson on the driver's helmet design for the race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. "Blake is a country music powerhouse and good friend of motorsports fans everywhere," IMS President Doug Boles said. "For both spectators at the track and everyone watching on NBC, his winning energy will be a perfect fit for the intensity of 'The Greatest Spectacle of Racing.'" WWE global ambassador Titus O'Neil will serve as

grand marshal of the Indy 500 Snake Pit, a traditional party zone in the track's infield.

O'Neil will hype the party from the Snake Pit stage before the green flag waves.

"Top Gun: Maverick" actor Miles Teller had previously been announced as the honorary starter.

Scott Dixon smashed the Indianapolis 500 pole-winning record with a qualifying run of more than 234 mph.

He will lead the 33-car field to the green flag Sunday. □



Blake Shelton performs before the NASCAR All-Star auto race at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth, Texas, Sunday, May 22, 2022.

Associated Press

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